

THE MAGAZINE





# In this issue

The "P" words - Politics, Partying, & Preparation for the Holidays!

While holiday preparations and partying actually bring people closer together, politics creates dissonance and divisions, if you let it! Playing politics with fear and division is wrong, but disappointingly this is what is occurring. Thanks to much of the often radical and depressing rhetoric politics has taken on a very negative and adversarial tone. All one need do is to turn on the television, open any popular search engine on the internet, peruse the pages of any newspaper and the venom just pours out. We hear news casts of high school students who are lambasted for their positions on the stem cell issues on the Missouri ballot, elected officials being uninvited to participate in rallies, and reporters being taken to task for editorials and their reports. These are indeed tenuous times and we can only hope that after this election, we will all find a way to pull together and put the past few months of venom behind us. But as many recognize, the mid-term elections only signal the beginning of the Presidential campaign season. Buckle your seat belts; this could be a rough ride.

## Senate races to watch

Control of the U.S. Senate hangs on a handful of states. How likely voters would cast ballots if the election were held now:

### Missouri

Claire McCaskill (D) **46%**

Sen. Jim Talent (R)\* **43%**

### Montana

John Tester (D) **46%**

Sen. Conrad Burns (R)\* **43%**

### New Jersey

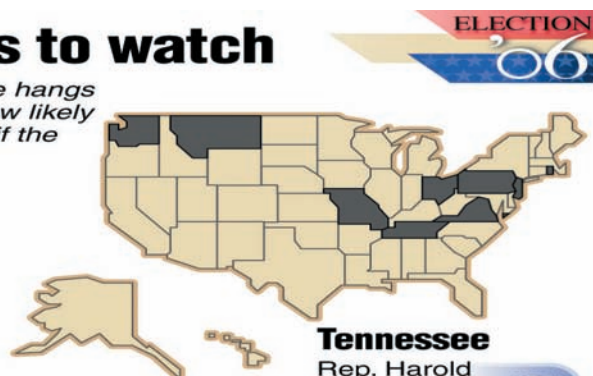
Sen. Robert Menendez (D)\* **45%**

Tom Kean Jr. (R) **42%**

### Ohio

Rep. Sherrod Brown (D)\* **48%**

Sen. Mike DeWine (R)\* **40%**



### Tennessee

Rep. Harold Ford Jr. (D) **43%**

Bob Corker (R) **45%**

### Virginia

James Webb (D) **43%**

Sen. George Allen (R)\* **47%**

### Washington

Sen. Maria Cantwell (D)\* **52%**

Mike McGavick (R) **37%**

\*Incumbent

Note: Answers do not total 100% because not all responses are shown

### Pennsylvania

State Treasurer Bob Casey Jr. (D) **51%**

Sen. Rick Santorum (R)\* **39%**

### Rhode Island

Sheldon Whitehouse (D) **48%**

Sen. Lincoln Chafee (R)\* **43%**



Source: McClatchy/MSNBC poll and Mason-Dixon Virginia Poll of 625 likely voters in each state, Oct. 17-21, 2006; margin of error +/- 4 percentage points

Graphic: Judy Treible, Lee Hulteng

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## Talon Editorial Team



**Changing our way:** (left to right) John DeRoo, Chadd Rivera, Banen Chaney, Caitlin Stephenson, Rachel VanMeerhaeghe, Erin Stewart, and Tiara Burns.

# TALON

N E W S M A G A Z I N E



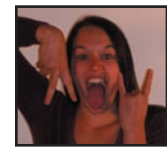
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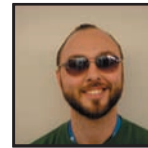
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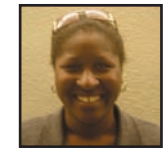
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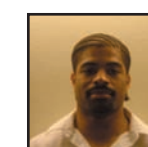
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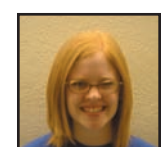
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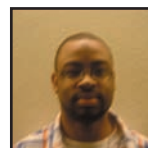
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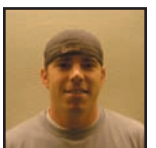
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## Happy Thanksgiving



## Avila Community Blood Drive Touted as Success

By Waldo Martinez

The importance of a good local blood supply is of utmost importance for local doctors and emergency workers. This is to ensure that if needed, the supply of blood is ready and well stocked in order to help save lives. This year's Community Blood drive was touted as a success by its mobile unit workers. Erica Holland, the collection supervisor commented, "It was a great turnout." The community blood drive mobile unit is out everyday visiting high schools, hospitals, businesses, and lawyer offices in order to try to get a good supply of blood for the local area. This ensures that all blood types are well stocked, but the O blood type is especially needed because of its rarity. The supply is intended to stock blood supplies on the Missouri and Kansas side of the city. Jason Baldwin, Associate Director of student life, is also the coordinator of the community blood drive at Avila. He says, "This is the sixth year that I've done the drive, but this the first year for electronic enrollment." This year's drive began at 10 a.m. and finished around 2p.m. The whole procedure, including the interview, generally lasts between thirty and forty five minutes. The short time is convenient for those who are weary of giving blood. With online enrollment as well, giving blood is less time consuming than one might think. If you would like more information please visit [www.bloodislife.com](http://www.bloodislife.com).



## Michael Charmant: Returns to share the news

By Eudora Savage

After graduating in May of 2006 Michael Charmant a Film major returned to visit Avila University. During his visit he visited the Talon office to share some of the exciting things he has been involved with after his graduation last spring. After graduating, Charmant shared that he surfed the web for over 300 various production opportunities before landing opportunities in Florida and New York. Although Charmant is considered a native of Freeport, Bahamas he actually came to the US when he was eight years old. He has traveled to Haiti, The Dominican Republic, and Jamaica since his graduation. Presently, he lives in Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

Charmant enjoys his work with Steady Image Multimedia Production and concentrates mainly on the Caribbean demographic. He specializes in music videos. Steady Image is also incorporated with Frame by Frame Production and Charmant works with Comcast, Bet, Bet Jazz and Karib-link television. Presently, Charmant is working on a concert with Richie Spice, a Caribbean musician. What Mr. Charmant love about what he does is the fact that he gets to control what he is doing and also gets to be creative. Charmant states that he has never done that same work twice for any of his clients, and none of his clients have been disappointed with his work for them. Charmant stays motivated and has a passion for what he does. He works over 80 hours a week and never stops until the work is completely done. One of his worst experiences was shooting a video in a forest where he was overwhelmed had mosquito bites.

What Mr. Charmant gained from Avila, he states, the classes especially the

Avant – Garde has taken him to another world and level and taught him how to be creative using everything he comes into contact with he then captures and reuses in another sense or form. A pencil to another person may be a drum stick in the Charmant perspective. The classes at Avila have helped him to be creative and unique.

Charmant shared that "The real world can be very shady and times, and one has to know what to do and know how to lead and follow at the same time". According to Charmant, this is where the Team Leadership class at Avila helped his perspective. He cautioned that, "the real world will always try to get anyone for less than what they are worth". He continued, "Being attentive counts and also paying close attention to contracts but the most important thing is to really, really know what you are talking about".

Mr. Charmant has worked with Beanie man and Freeway, Caribbean musicians and Designers at BET wants he as a model to do subliminal advertising. Mr. Charmant plans for the future is to produce fifty videos in 5 years.

Mr. Charmant's advice for upcoming graduates is to learn from experienced individuals that know what they are doing. The world is ready for creativity; make sure you are prepared before

stepping out it can be rough.

To see some of Mr. Charmant's work visit my space, he is listed as the arabesque. Mr. Charmant's full networking space will be available in December of 2006. The Talon will keep students informed on Charmant's progress, as well as other Avila alum.





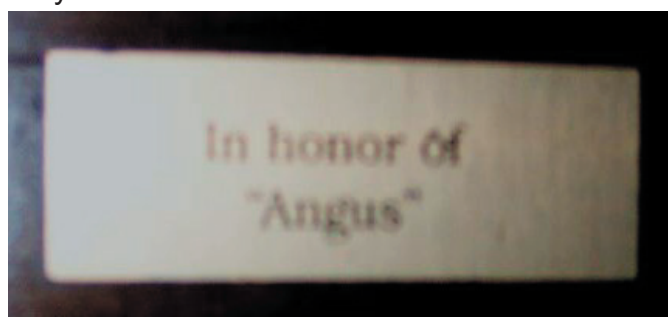
# campus

## The Ghost of Goppert

By Janos Serfozo

The Goppert Theatre here at Avila has produced many plays and has served for many other countless meetings and functions. But what many don't know is that the Goppert Theatre has a permanent resident. This permanent residents' name is Angus. You can't see Angus but his spirit could see you.

When Goppert Theatre was being built one of the men (Angus) fell to his death from one of the support beams. His body fell on the bottom front left of the stadium seating. If you were looking at the seats from the stage it would be on the bottom right front. However, Angus' spirit lives on in the theatre. He is at every production that goes on and he even has his own seat with his name engraved on a plaque. That seat is always down in the sit position and is the only seat down in the whole theatre. "If Angus does not like the production something usually happens. Like a light bulb going out or something would fall and make a loud noise," said Rod Burton, the overnight security guard here on campus. "If he likes the show then nothing would happen," he added. The students that work on the stage hear things as well. They also find things in different places from where they left them. So the next time you walk in Goppert Theatre, don't walk in alone. Oh yeah, look for the only seat that is down. It's there and so is he.



The Talon would like to congratulate John DeRoo for his Regional Emmy win!



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## Scrapbooking is back

By Emily Hoskins

Oh baby, basic scrap booking is back! And honestly, who doesn't love a good scrapbook. Host, Debbie Thorton will help you learn how to incorporate your precious photos into an album that will tell a colorful story. How many people have just stacks and stacks of pictures that are being hidden away from the world? Now's the time to bring em' out and show off those good times. Debbie is an incredibly creative woman that has been scrap booking for years and years. Students first approached Debbie for guidance about their books and it just escalated into a fun filled day once a month. In every meeting one will learn the exciting and latest tips and techniques that will help make your books look fabulous and personalized. Johnny Turnage a student who attends the meetings mentioned that scrap booking "allows for you to relax and create memories." Johnny had a great time at the last one and definitely plans on going to the upcoming one. If you already missed the first meeting in September in the Marian Lounge, don't miss another one. There will be materials and cardstock provided, so don't forget to bring your pictures! There will be meetings once a month until December. So please, don't miss this exciting fun and just

keep in mind that Debbie Thorton says that scrap booking "is the best way to preserve memories."



## Quilts for Katrina

By Emily Hoskins

Many people in this great nation have been severely affected by the recent natural disaster of

person can create their own quilt square however they prefer, whether it is by painting or drawing on it, the possibilities are endless. And when that square is completed, then it will be connected with many other squares to make the finished product, a beautiful queen size quilt.



Hurricane Katrina and now is the time and opportunity to get together to learn, have fun and help contribute something worth while to the hurricane victims.

On Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> the Counseling and Art therapy Graduate Program sponsored an opportunity for anyone to come and help make quilts for New Orleans families that are in need. All ages in the community were welcome to participate and of course it was open to all Avila University students.

With a good response from the community, quilt and craft stores in the area were able to donate a great deal of materials that will be used to create the quilts. Each

the events of Hurricane Katrina, mentioned that a good reason for attending this event is, "to help give quilts to Katrina victims that need our help and create a sense of community to those who have lost theirs."

And she continued her statement by saying, "we would also be providing a sense of comfort by letting them know that other people care about them in this world."

The creation of these quilts puts art therapy in the works, which is aimed at improving and enhancing the physical, mental and emotional well-being of people of all ages.

While helping to make Avila's

own quilt in the art therapy class, Nanny Mead said, "We learned that it's an important opportunity to share stories and understand each other and develop friendships. It is also an opportunity for people who where affected to grieve and talk about their experience."

On November 15, 2006, when all of the quilts have been completed, they will be taken to an art conference in New Orleans that is put on by the American Art Therapy Association, so all of the freshly sewed quilts will be put to good use.

Art therapy student Amber Davis shared some of her thoughts by saying, "all of us have a connection in some way to what

happened and have a sense of loss and now we have a chance to do something about it."

Avila is offering anyone who cares to attend that event a chance to assist another community in need.

Art therapy student Michelle Kile said it best when she said that, "As human beings it's our duty to do our part to better the lives of others in need."

Director of Counseling and Art Therapy, Laura Aubé also extended an invitation to everyone. "Everyone is invited to have fun, be creative, and maybe learn a little bit about art therapy, but above all to have the experience of giving to another community."





## Psi Chi and Psychology Club Unleashed

By Emily Hoskins

The Psi Chi and Psychology club is one of the best student organizations at Avila. The energetic and intelligent officers are finding new, fresh ways to get involved with the community, help their fellow students, and just have fun.

Club president Megan Wright led the meeting that was had on October 16, 2006 and addressed many up and coming events and important dates. One of the most important things mentioned were the dates for the advising that the officers of the club will provide to any psychology students that need it. The exact dates of the advising will be October 31, 2006, November 1, 7, and 8, all of which will be from 12-1:30 p.m., and will be held at either Foyle Hall or the Marian Center. The exact location will be emailed to students as soon as it is decided upon. This will help students immensely in picking classes for their psychology majors.

The Missouri Conference is coming on November 10, 2006, which is an opportunity for individuals to present their research that they have conducted. Any Avila student is welcome with a small fee of 5 dollars for the cost of the meals provided. Individuals from different schools will be attending and Professor Maria Hunt added that "it gives the students the opportunity to see other students and what they can do, and off of that get some insight ideas."

Another new event that the club added is a fun filled "Psych Night."

On this night, that will be had twice a month, will be nothing but hanging out and having fun. Just look for the emails that will lead you to when and where these fantastic nights of fun will be.

The requirements for the Psi Chi National Honor Society is at least nine semester hours of Psychology courses and in the top third cumulative grade point averages of your class. But just to be a part of the wonderful Psychology club all one has to do is to have an interest in psychology. There will also be a professor from Rockhurst University that will be coming to Avila and visiting some classes. If any student would have the desire to do so, this professor is willing to stay during lunchtime and talk to whomever interested and share her knowledge.

If you are interested in joining the Psi Chi and Psychology club, there will be a meeting on the second Monday of every month and if the dates of times ever get changed, it will be emailed for all to be notified.

Keep your eyes open for emails or posters and flyers up on campus because you never know what the Psi Chi and Psychology club will do next.

## International students Q & A

By Waldo Martinez

In celebration of Avila's student body diversity, this month's Talon magazine will feature students from various countries around the world. This month's issue will feature two students from Japan, Kanae Maeda and Haruka Nakan.

Where are you both from?

*Kanae:* I was born in Osaka Japan.

*Haruka:* I was born in Nagano Japan.

What are your majors of study, and what do you like to do here, compared to what you like to do in Japan?

*Kanae:* My major is undecided right now. Since I have been in the U.S., I like to read books. In Japan I liked to hangout with my friends, go shopping, but I don't like to go to clubs.

*Haruka:* My major is undecided. Here in the U.S. I like the Nightlife and talking with different people. In Japan I liked to do abstract art. Things like drawing graffiti.

Haruka, your nickname is "Coco". Explain what that means.

*Haruka:* In the Japanese equivalent it means, "I'm here."

What brought you both to Avila, and what do you like about studying here in the U.S.?

*Kanae:* I used an Agency in Japan which matched me with Avila. I like the environment at Avila. There is a low crime rate and the people are nice.

*Haruka:* I like the Avila Professors and how they know the students individually. The area is a safe, and I like that studying here allows for easier travel around the U.S.

What are your favorite movies here and in Japan?

*Kanae:* My favorite U.S. movie is "The Notebook."

*Haruka:* My favorite movie in the U.S. is "Kids." In Japan it is "Brother."

What would you both like to take away with you when you leave the U.S.?

*Haruka:* I would like to take some of the U.S. culture with me, and I would also like to have friends to keep in touch with.

*Kanae:* I would like to know as much of the American culture and English language as I can.





# Fellowship of Christian Athletes comes to Avila

By Michele Michalski

Avila excitedly welcomes the Fellowship of Christian Athletes to the University. Thanks to three students who believe that leadership and faith are important in our everyday lives, we now have a new way of bringing our campus together. These students are Josh Loden, Emily Bilyew, and Kristen Lyming.

The FCA is the largest Christian sports organization in America. It is a non-profit, interdenominational ministry that reaches out to all young athletes in our society. Their values are very similar to Avila's. They strive to allow young people's relationships to demonstrate a steadfast commitment to Jesus Christ and His word through integrity, service, teamwork, and excellence. FCS strives to define excellence by honoring and glorifying God in all that it does.

The FCA was started in 1954 with the hope of spiritually uniting believers Jesus Christ.

"A coach can lead kids up a mountain or down the drain, depending on how he lives his life," said H. Clay Fiske, a former coach. These are the words that led founder Don McClanan to start an organization such as this one.

FCA is over 50 years old and reaches thousands of young athletes everywhere.

The FCA, like Avila, also hopes to break racial barriers and stop discrimination among young people and in communities. Another goal is to help with the uneven distribution of wealth by trying to give those less fortunate the same chance.

If you're interested in becoming part of an organization like FCA sign up sheets are located outside the Campus Ministry office located in the same building as the Orscheln Memorial Chapel.

"A leader sees a different view everyday. A follower sees the same picture. It's easy to be a follower—to do the same thing over and over again. A leader has to take a stand and take criticism, whether he or she deserves it or not. And the moment you can take that stand as a leader, you will be able to impact a lot of people." —John Smoltz, pitcher for the Atlanta Braves.



# Dr. Reulan Levin: A professor of Substance

By Eudora Savage

Dr. Reulan Levin, an associate professor in the School of Education, has been teaching for 36 years, and has taught at Avila full time for 11 years. She has been an adjunct for four years and taught in public schools for 20 years. Dr. Levin taught an upper bound program at Avila for 10 years. She is from the South of Chicago and grew up in the urban area.

Growing up Dr. Levin had a scholarship on voice and sang professional opera. She wanted to teach music and be a Choir Director, but had throat surgery. Her heart was set on giving back to the community and at the same time she enjoyed teaching. To Dr. Levin teaching is a rewarding career.

Why she loves Avila; she enjoys the fact that it is a Christian based institution, a close-knit community, enjoys her colleagues and has the freedom to develop programs. She is proud to be a part of Avila's School of education and has always been involved in cutting edge strategies. One of her goals is to prepare students to teach any child.

The highlights in her career she stated, was being awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to Senegal, and writing a curriculum for the United States Department of Education teaching in England.

Dr. Levin's main accomplishment is helping urban schools with the majority population made of minority and 60% are on free education and reduced lunch. Dr. Levin believes that urban children have the ability to excel and learn.

The Grandview School recommended Dr. Levin, in August 2004 as a mentor for Project SUCCESS: Closing the Achievement Gap Consortium. The 2004-2007 Consortium is a project of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). DESE and the Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (OSED), and the Mid-continent Research for Education Learning (McREL) collaborated to provide Project SUCCESS. The goal of the project is to close the achievement gap between sub groups of students, primarily African American and low income, and to assist them to attain proficient levels.

As a mentor, Dr. Levin is assigned to Martin City Middle School where students refer to her as the "vocabulary lady" in the Grandview School District. The school has about three hundred students with the population consisting of 41% Caucasian, 46% African American, and about 12% Hispanic. Dr. Levin devotes a minimum of six hours a week

to the project, to mentor, model, and monitor the school leadership team, and faculty in the research based strategies.

The research strategies focus on school leadership and developing a purposeful and professional learning community, creating a guaranteed and viable curriculum, and instructional strategies. Dr. Levin has received training in all these areas from McREL with emphasis on vocabulary across the curriculum.

Due to the research strategies, Martin City Middle School met adequate yearly proficiency in both communication

and art, as stated by the school's 2006 state assessment scores. Other schools that have seen the improvement of Martin City Middle School are interested in the methodologies.

The practices Dr. Levin learned are being taught to Avila education students and shared with colleagues in the School of Education.

For the future Dr. Levin accepts the challenge of working with more urban schools.





## Presidential Inauguration

By Rachel VanMeerhaeghe

On October 20, 2006, Avila inducted its 13<sup>th</sup> president, Dr. Ron Slepitz. Dr. Slepitz comes to Avila from Xavier University where he was Vice President of Student Development.

His inauguration day began with a mass held at St. Thomas More Parish, continued with a ceremony at Goppert Theatre, and concluded with a reception. Friends, family, faculty, staff and students were in attendance to help commemorate the event.

The ceremony began with a processional by the University Singers, followed by an Academic Procession. Many had the opportunity to speak about Dr. Slepitz but what really stood out was the speech from his daughter, Molly. As she began to tear up at the end of her speech, she could not praise her father enough for the wonderful person that he is and the great changes she knows he will make at Avila.

During the ceremony Dr. Slepitz was presented with a gift of lace from Le Puy, France. The Sisters of St. Joseph were founded in Le Puy, France where one of their first ministries was the craft of lace making. He was also presented with the Presidential Medallion of the University seal which bears the inscription, "Deo adjuvante non timendum" meaning "God helping, fear not."

Dr. Slepitz then had his turn to speak of his challenges and goals for the university. "Acting Boldly in Times of Change" is his focus for the university. He stated that he wants to take Avila into the community and let the community know the great things that the university does. His goal is to bring the students, faculty, and staff into a cohesive whole, working together to make a greater university.





# “All About Avila” Day

By Kayle Walker



## campus

Despite the early morning rain ruining the chances of outdoor tours, “All About Avila Day” was a success. About 50 or 60 potential Avila students and their families attended the event, which kicked off at 8:30 AM, October 21, 2006.

After check-in, students were welcomed and went right into Academic sessions. Following the sessions, students had two chances to break out into more personal sessions that were interesting to them. A few of the sessions included: “Life as an Eagle,” “Financing an Avila Education,” “Life as a Student Athlete,” and a few others. As the sessions came to a close, students had the opportunity to take a tour of the campus and ask questions.

The students then joined together for lunch in the Marian Centre, prepared by Avila’s cafeteria.

“All About Avila Day” ended with an Organization Fair in the Alumni Lounge. The fair was a chance for organizations around campus to give the prospective students a glance into the activities Avila offers. A few of the booths included Black Student Union, aStudent Life, and many more. At the end of the day, the students were then asked to fill out evaluations about their experience.

Michelle Lockhart Assistant Director of Admissions was satisfied with the outcome of the occasion.

“My initial review of the evaluations gave some great feedback to our campus,” said Lockhart.

One prospective student said “I am really interested in attending Avila and this helped a lot!”





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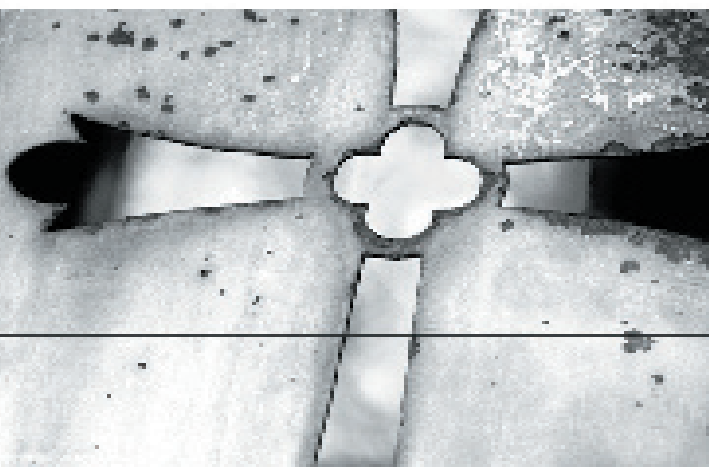
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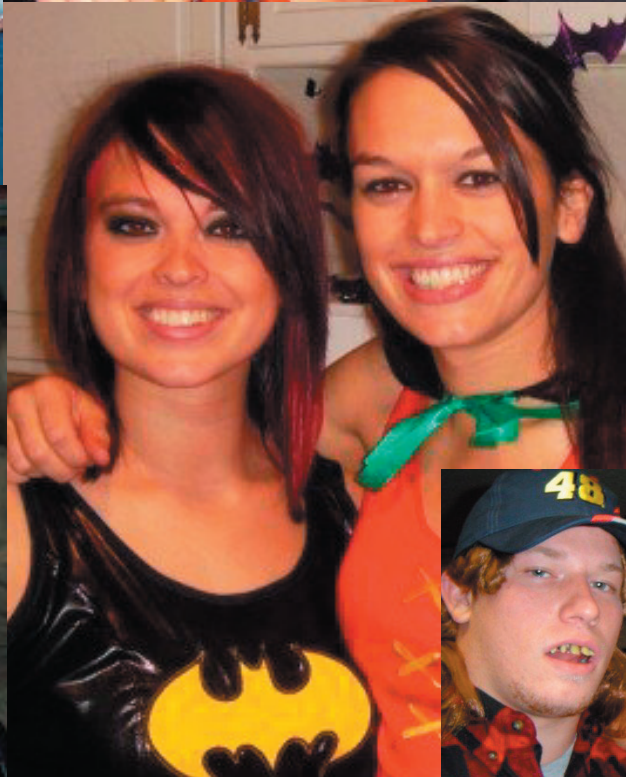
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**WHAT WILL YOU ADD TO THE MIX?**  
**AVILA UNIVERSITY**  
**HIGH SCHOOL ART INVITATIONAL 2006**



# Pictures of a haunted holiday





feature



# It's that time of year again

## Cells, Clones, and the Amendment

By Ben Kopp

Precisely one week before the November 2006 General Elections, a panel was gathered at noon in Whitfield Center with a rather well-sized audience. The topic could have covered a variety of topics from one or more of the races in the legislature to the different amendments proposed for the Missouri Constitution, but this discussion was to address one amendment in particular from a medical, legal, and ethical standpoint. The amendment in question was Amendment Two, which would legalize and aid stem cell research—both embryonic and adult—and cloning. Discussing Amendment Two would be Dr. Charles Horner of the St. Joseph Medical Center, Marty Meyers of the Meyers Law Firm, and Sister Ruth Stuckel, who teaches philosophy and ethics at Avila University.

Dr. Horner first discussed how everyone must be informed of the procedures involved as well as the benefits and risks thereof. The audience learned of how “egg harvesting is needed” for the purpose of being enucleated and filled with the chromosomal matter of other cells, which allows the cloning of human embryos. Because the benefits—including the potential possibility of finding cures for a variety of diseases and conditions—have been publicized several times, Dr. Horner maintained a focus on the risks and consequences such as threats to women created by the harvesting of their eggs and the exploitation of women in need of money. In order to avoid the risks and consequences, Dr. Horner says adult stem cells may be continued to be used as they are without Amendment Two because adult stem cells—as currently used—are more “pluripotent,” or flexible, than embryonic stem cells.

Marty Meyers, the second to speak, began his discussion with how the summary of Amendment Two that will appear on the ballot is a “misleading summary” and how “the bishops joined a lawsuit this year trying against the Secretary of State,” who approves ballot summaries. The further problem with this situation include the loopholes in Amendment Two Meyers discussed, which would allow the medical profession to legally do that which advocates say cannot be done under Amendment Two. Meyers then pointed out the sections of the Missouri Constitution that would be amended. Such changes, as mentioned in his final point, would allow funding for stem cell research to remain constant once added no matter how much the legislature may wish for the funding to fluctuate from year to year.

Sister Ruth, as the third speaker, turned the focus of the discussion to the ethics of Amendment Two. The audience was to first understand that each person's belief system needs to be taken into consideration—whether life absolutely begins at conception or only if the zygote is in the woman. Sister Ruth then discussed the several ways in which the ethics of Amendment Two can be perceived: Divine Law, Natural Law, and Universal Law. A point was then made that people should examine the “action, motivation, and consequences” in question. Before the panel went to questioning, Sister Ruth asked everyone to remember that throughout history “the right thing has been done for the wrong motive, and the wrong thing has been done for the right motive.” It was on this note, the panel moved to the questioning and provided several answers to reemphasize important points of the speeches.

## Races to watch

By Ben Kopp

With the 2006 General Election approaching quickly, the states of Missouri and Kansas are finding themselves with potential for some critical changes. In the 34<sup>th</sup> District of the Missouri Senate Charlie Shields (R-inc) will be facing David W. Mason (D). Shields has sponsored a bill to give teachers a tax credit for purchasing class materials and has co-sponsored bills to honor the memory of Former President Ronald Reagan. Mason is a teacher from the St. Joseph School District who holds a Masters of Sociology; his father has held political office.

For the US Representatives, three races—two in Missouri and one in Kansas—hit close to home. Covering the northwestern portion of Missouri down to a section of Jackson County, the Sixth District Seat will be given to either Samuel Graves (R-inc) or Sara Jo Shettles. Both candidates have worked to reduce the suffering of their surrounding populations. The Fifth District, which holds Avila University, will go to either Emanuel Cleaver II (D-inc) or Jacob Turk (R). Cleaver is a long-term politician, and Turk is a former small business owner and Marine. On the Kansas side the Third District will see a battle between Dennis Moore (D-inc) and Chuck Ahner (R). Both candidates want low taxes, but they do not see eye-to-eye on several issues such as immigration policy, which has been a hotter topic in recent months.

Three more races hold candidates who have made themselves more known in their regions. Representing the Thirty-fourth District for the Missouri Senate, Charlie Shields (R-inc) will be racing against David W. Mason (D). In the US Senate, Jim Talent (R-inc) will be running against Claire McCaskill. On the Kansas side, Governor Kathleen Sebelius (D-inc) is up for reelection against Jim Barnett (R). Although polls are rather close and cannot really tell who will win, it appears that Jim Talent is incumbent most likely not to be reelected. At this point in time, votes can still be gained and lost by either side of any race, making it even more important to go to the polls and vote.



Becky Cox  
1st Year Student

“People shouldn't vote if they don't know anything about politics or the candidates. What's going on is our government is important.”



Bailey Umstattd  
2nd Year Student

“Voting is a privilege. Everyone is willing to complain about what's wrong with our society, but no one is will do anything to change it. Voting gives us the opportunity to have a choice of what's being done in our society. I will be voting in November.”





feature

# do you know where you stand?



## They Must Think Voters Are Stupid

By Katie Feierabend

Amendment 2: the Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative. It sounds nice and quite promising; could this amendment to Missouri's constitution be a leap toward new cures and treatments for painful, tragic, or fatal diseases? Who would be heartless enough to oppose that?

There has been much controversy and complaints on both sides about lies and deception surrounding Amendment 2. Money has gone into opposing the campaign with television commercials about the dangers of donating eggs, the exploitation of women that will result if the amendment is passed, and the deliberate deceptions written in the document of Amendment 2.

Over 16 million dollars has gone into funding the amendment's campaign, which has flooded the media with stories designed to tug at the heart strings of Missourians, and convince citizens that Amendment 2 will lead to cures and bans cloning. On November 7, Missouri voters will choose whether or not to adopt Amendment 2, and, unfortunately, many will vote without the ability to see through the deceptions.

A recent commercial opposing Amendment 2, portrayed a young woman who was an egg donor and is now distraught and grieving over her decision. The ad was provided by the Vitae Caring Foundation in Jefferson City and addresses a main concern about Amendment 2. Many people were angry to find out that the young woman was a paid actress who had never donated eggs and therefore never suffered any health consequences from it. The proponents of Amendment 2 say that the health risks are exaggerated in the ad and that experts report the risks are minimal, although, even the small risks would be magnified if egg donation were increased for stem cell research. Risks include strokes, infertility, organ failure and death.

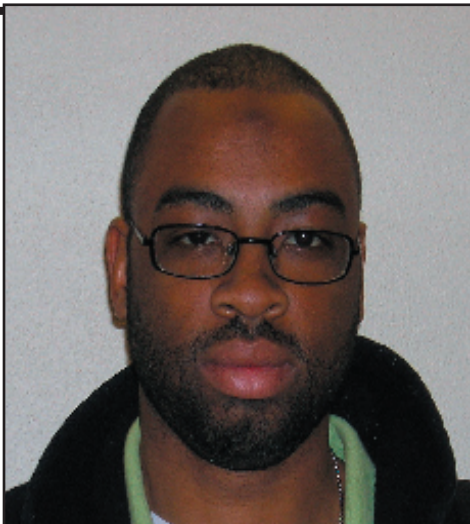
Opponents of the amendment also argue that it deceives people to think that if Missouri citizens do not vote for Amendment 2, Missouri patients will not have access to cures and therapies. The amendment urges people to adopt it as to ensure that, "...any stem cell research permitted under federal law may be conducted in Missouri, and any stem cell therapies and cures permitted under federal law may be provided to patients in Missouri..."

Some challenge Amendment 2, accusing its language to be misleading because Missouri already has access to any cures and therapies legally available throughout the U.S. Missouri researchers, as in any other state, can already conduct any research that is legal in the U.S.

Much of the debate for some Missourians centers on religious issues. The bishop of Kansas City, Bishop Robert W. Finn, has strongly come out against Amendment 2 and is urging all Catholic Missourians to fight it. He and many others argue that while the amendment claims to ban cloning, it actually does the opposite. Perhaps the most important issue with Amendment 2 is that of cloning. Major opposition to embryonic stem cell research in the past has been people's fear of cloning human beings, which Amendment 2 addresses. The document of Amendment 2 tries to relieve the fear of cloning by specifically stating, "No person may clone or attempt to clone a human being." However, what will not appear on the voting ballot is the definition of cloning. It later goes on in section 6.2 to redefine what cloning is: "Clone or attempt to clone a human being" means to implant in a uterus or attempt to implant in a uterus anything other than the product of fertilization of an egg of a human female by a sperm of a human male for the purpose of initiating a pregnancy that could result in the creation of a human fetus, or the birth of a human being." This is where the amendment is deceptive many say.

John Morris, associate professor of philosophy at Rockhurst University and other opponents of Amendment 2 argue that while the amendment says that it bans cloning, it will actually do the opposite because of how it defines cloning. Morris has said, "The key word is 'purpose'. You can still implant it and say the purpose is not to produce a baby. You can implant it, let it grow, abort it, take out the kidneys and give them to another baby. All you have to do is kill the clone before live birth." The embryos for stem cell research are produced by a method called somatic cell nuclear transfer in which the nucleus of a human egg is removed and replaced by another nucleus from a body cell containing all 46 chromosomes. When this is done, an exact genetic copy of the donor begins to develop.

Examining these issues surrounding Amendment 2 is important for all voters, including Avila students. If the amendment is adopted it will affect the Missouri constitution, which has a large part in Missouri citizens lives. On November 7, Avila students can help determine a piece of their future.



Michael Franklin  
3rd Year Student

"Voting is pointless because of the electoral college. Until they get rid of it people will never truly pick the president. You can see truth in the Bush election because he didn't win the popular vote."



Jose Ruiz  
5th Year Student

"People should be informed about the candidates and their values before they vote. They should have a reason about why they are voting or not voting for a certain candidate."



## Remembering Buck

By Khasan Simmons

Friday October 6, 2006, marks the day we lost a good man, hero, historian and friend of Kansas City. John Jordan O'Neil, also known as Buck O'Neil, passed away due to congestive heart failure. O'Neil was 94-years-old, almost a month away from celebrating his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. During his 94 years he accomplished a lot, and focused on helping others.

Buck O'Neil served as the Board Chairman of the Negro League Baseball Museum (NLBM), located on 18<sup>th</sup> and Vine Street in Kansas City, Mo. The NLBM is the only museum dedicated to preserving the history of Negro League Baseball, and O'Neil played a key role in turning the museum into a reality. He is closely associated with Kansas City, but his roots stem from Florida.

Buck O'Neil was born in Carrabelle, Florida on November 13, 1911. He was the grandson of a slave and had to overcome many obstacles. O'Neil was denied the chance to attend high school because of racial segregation in his town. He later moved from Carrabelle, FL to live with relatives in Jacksonville, FL where he attended high school and Edwards Waters College. O'Neil left Florida and began his baseball career in 1934 playing semi-pro and competing in interracial exhibition games. He also broke color barriers becoming the first black coach in the Major League in 1962, with the Chicago Cubs.

O'Neil enjoyed his life to the fullest and continued to be active. He signed a contract with the Kansas City T-Bones minor league team to become one of the oldest players to play professional baseball. Sadly, with all of O'Neil's professional accomplishments he was denied entry into the Hall Of Fame, falling short by one vote.

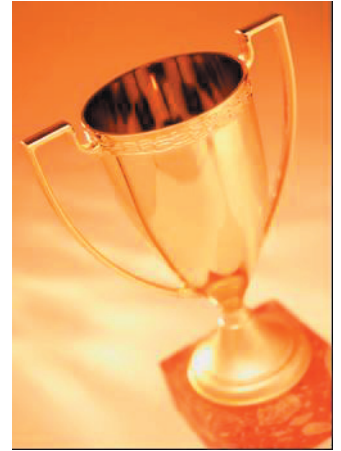
O'Neil was said to be optimistic and full of energy, active, humble, funny and a natural storyteller and he loved meeting people. David Wissmann, a professor in the Sociology Department at Avila University actually met Mr. O'Neil and had a few conversations with him during past field trips to the NLBM.

"Mr. O'Neil was wonderful," Wissmann said. "He was very gracious to the students and me. He went out of his way to greet the group and spent a significant amount of his time with us."

After being denied entry to the Hall Of Fame O'Neil said, "If I'm a Hall of Famer for you, that's alright with me....Just keep loving old Buck, don't weep for Buck."



## Congratulations



to the Women's Basketball and Men's Soccer teams for winning the Fred Geer Cup at this year's Eagle Madness homecoming celebration. This award is given annually to the men's and women's athletic teams that accumulated the highest GPA among all the other sports teams the previous school year. Keep up the good work and good luck to all the other athletic teams!



Buck O'Neil, Lou Gossett Jr., and Prof. Snorgrass



## Season Ended by Red Bulls

By Patrick Devero

The season is over for the Kansas City Wizards. Needing only a tie to advance to the playoffs, the Wizards lost 3-2 to the New York Red Bulls. The Wizards and Red Bulls played their regular season finale Saturday at Giants Stadium, both looking to take the fourth spot in the Eastern Conference. The game started off great for the visiting Wizards. In the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute, Dave van den Bergh volleyed home a rebound after Red Bulls goalkeeper Jon Conway blocked a Josh Wolff shot. Then came two controversial calls by referee Ricardo Salazar, in the 30<sup>th</sup> minute, the referee whistled a foul in the box by Wizard's defender Ryan Raybould, resulting in a penalty kick. Red Bulls captain Amado Guevara stepped up and converted, tying up the game at one apiece. Another controversial penalty call was given in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute. Wizards' defender Jose Burciaga Jr. was adjudged to bring down a Red Bulls' player in the box. Amado Guevara again stepped up and buried his penalty kick. Fifteen minutes later, Amado Guevara put the game away with his third goal of the game. The Wizards fought back and scored their second in the 83<sup>rd</sup> minute with a nice goal from Scott Sealy. Controversy struck again in the 87<sup>th</sup> minute. Wizard's defender Nick Garcia was ejected from the game, receiving a red card for bringing down Red Bulls' forward John Wolyniec. The Wizards could not muster up another goal to draw the game even; and for the second season in a row, will not compete in the playoffs.

## WORD GAMES (answers below)

R E A D I N G

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ATTENTION

## KC Advertising Club

### Career Day 2006

Friday, November 10th

8 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Colonial Presbyterian Church

9500 Wornall Road - Kansas City, MO

(NW corner of Wornall Road and Bannister)

Learn about careers in Corporate Marketing, Public Relations, Advertising and Account Management, Sports Marketing, Agency Creative Direction, Event Planning, Promotions, and more. Also learn about developing and presenting an effective portfolio. Learn more now so you can develop an appropriate career plan and make intentional decisions to enhance your knowledge, skills, and marketability!

Registration forms are available  
in Avila's Career Corner, Hodes 709

The deadline is November 1.

Cost: \$30 for full day program, including a light breakfast  
and full lunch for those who register in advance.

## Update on an Eagle

By Michele Michalski

"I moved on to bigger things in life quicker than expected," Alumna Rachel Bradberry stated, when asked how she thought her career here at Avila affected her future.

Bradberry had a solid career here at Avila on the Women's Basketball team during the 2001-2005 seasons. Out of high school she received an athletic scholarship and started on the team all four years.

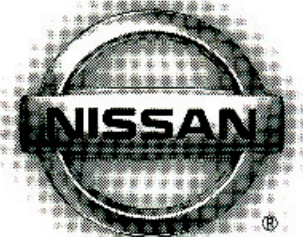
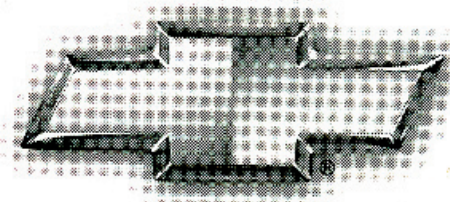
In her senior year here she tore her ACL, MCL and shredded her meniscus during the second game of the season. No longer able to play basketball she moved on and finished with a Bachelors degree in Art that year.

This will be her first year coaching the Ladies Varsity Basketball team and teaching at Lone Jack High School in Lone Jack, Missouri. She recently got married this past July. Bradberry is still furthering her education here at Avila by taking class' part time for her Masters Degree.

After her basketball career abruptly ended she was upset because she had played since she was in the fourth grade. Avila had fully prepared her through education and leadership and she is looking forward to her first season of coaching.

"Coaching really enables me to be an advocate for kids. I just want to see them succeed. And I think it will be great to be a part of it."

word game answers: "reading between the lines" and "split or divided attention"



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## Women's Basketball

By John De Roo

As the Avila women's basketball team prepares to begin their 2006-07 season, they will be under the leadership of new head coach Larry Williams.

Coach Williams comes to Avila after spending the last seven years as an assistant at William Jewell.

When asked how he felt his team was taking shape he said, "the girls have been overwhelmingly enthusiastic to the new system. They are at a disadvantage because they have to adapt to my style. We are taking it day-by-day, still basically trying to run and catch the ball."

Coach Williams loves the girls he has to coach and says it is tough for him to control his enthusiasm about the upcoming year.

"I can't sleep at night I'm so excited" he said.

Coach Williams believes MidAmerica Nazarene and William Jewell are the top two teams in the conference followed by Evangel, Baker, and Benedictine.

"The other six teams will try to move up from the bottom half to the top half and hopefully we will be one of those teams moving up," he said.

After spending 16 years of coaching boys' basketball at various high school spots and his stint at Jewell, he is entering his 24<sup>th</sup> year of coaching. He also appreciates the support that athletic director Mike Sharpe, head men's basketball coach Anthony Hall, and office secretary JoAnn Immele have given him.

"They have been very supportive and have been helping me out," Williams said, as he gets comfortable in his new position. Coach Williams is entering the season with "cautious optimism" and looks forward to bringing success in women's basketball to Avila University.

## Men's Basketball 2006-2007

By: Chadd Rivera

Four points is the combined margin that separated the Avila Eagles from beating number one Lindenwood last year in two games.

"The last couple years we have been knocking at the door, this year were going to knock it down," stated head coach Anthony Hall.

Hall, entering his third full year as head coach, said that he enters this year as he does every other, with a goal of a national championship.

"By aiming high other goals will be met along the way," said Hall.

This year's team is starting this season with one thought in mind, getting better every game.

Many people would be overly concerned about coming into this season with just two seniors and five freshmen but not coach Hall.

"All of the freshmen are going to play and some may start throughout the year," said coach Hall.

He understands that this doesn't come without consequence and recognizes that there will be some growing pains. The Eagles will look to returning senior Cort'Ney Turner to take on a bigger role, but more importantly to be a leader.

This season will be a learning experience for both the players and the coach. Coach Hall has signed a new mold of players from which he normally would. Where this year's team may slightly lack in athletic ability they make up for it with a better understanding of the game. Along with the difference in players, coach Hall is trying some new team activities.

"We're doing some small team bonding meetings, I feel like they are really bringing the team together to create a chemistry," said Hall.

With two NCAA DII transfers, five Junior College transfers, along with the freshmen, chemistry is possibly the key ingredient for this team to succeed.

Coach Hall has a side goal to this season. He wants to restore respect and bring success to Avila basketball and all Avila sports. Hall knows that he has a hard road ahead of him. It seems that he has the program moving in the right direction, if Hall's players follow their coach's lead, expect big things from the 2206-2007 Avila Eagles.





## More than a Brewery

By David Wilson

Listening to David O'Brien, General Manager talk about the 75<sup>th</sup> Street Brewery, one could easily mistake his elaborations as descriptions of a relative. He is not talking about a loved one, but rather a passion, a passion for good food and more importantly award winning beer.

"People come here for the same reason that they buy Omaha Steaks, they want the best," explained O'Brien

This has in fact been the norm for the Brew Pub for quite some time as they are one of the top ten in the nation.

James Taylor and Ed Nelson, both of whom are native to Kansas City and graduates of Rockhurst High School, as well as Kansas University, are the beginning of this young, but definite fixture of Kansas City. The two ambitious men, after graduating from KU did the research creating both a business and financial plan. The thorough plan that spanned 260 pages of content aided in the two 27-year-olds search for investors. Thus was the birth of Kansas City's best beers.

75<sup>th</sup> Street is more than just a wonderful establishment with deep local ties it is a family that has the loyalist crowd in the area. After just one visit it is easy to see why. The Brew Pub even commemorates the very first customer ever to enter back in 1993. Behind the wait station on the west side of the bar sits a plaque stating, "Official home of the aviator Jim Fenton, thanks for the memories." They also showed their great appreciation by naming another establishment after him, "Fenton's," ever heard of it? This is quite a tribute to both Mr. Fenton and the members of the KC Hopps community.

The mugs that overshadow the bar inadvertently tell the story of the patrons, with graduation steins ranging from Yale to the University of Missouri. One stein has such artistic merit that it appears as if it should be at the Nelson-Atkins rather than above a bar. These mugs are much more than a representation of the members of the Mug Club of 75<sup>th</sup> Street, but they are a ticket to lasting friendships and a comradeship formed in the name of unparalleled beer. Anyone can be a member of the mug club with a small 25-dollar annual fee that gives way to four yearly parties, numerous discounts, a 25-dollar certificate on your birthday, and of course your mug is kept for you at the bar.

The regulars convene seemingly daily and when asked why one loyal patron was called Santa, Mr. O'Brien responded by pointing to the end of the bar and saying, "because he looks like Santa."

Hopefully he takes over the active duty for the real Saint Nick, that way stockings would be full of Royal Raspberry Wheat and maybe some samplers of Muddy MO.

The wide arrangement of brews allows for everyone to have a favorite. The beer is brewed right in front of the customers in the center room visible to all. It is quite impressive to look in the glass windows and see the beauty of a single barrel with 676 gallons of beer. Specifically, they have five major beers, the Cowtown Wheat, Royal Raspberry Wheat, Cape of Good Hope IPA, Possum Trot Brown Ale, and the Muddy MO. Each of the beers has its own individual texture, taste, and title, and nothing can be said to do justice to the quality and craft that goes into each beer. "The brewers are not just making beer, they are artists," explained David O'Brien.

## A Look at FIFA Soccer 07

By Patrick Devero

FIFA Soccer 07 was released in North America on October 3, 2006 for the PlayStation 2, PlayStation Portable, Xbox, Nintendo GameCube, Nintendo DS, and Game Boy Advance. A version of the new game for the Xbox 360 will be released on October 31, 2006. FIFA Soccer 07 is the fourteenth installment of the EA Sports series.

On the cover this year is FIFA World Player of the Year, Ronaldinho for the second year in a row; accompanied by Francisco Fonseca and Landon Donovan.

FIFA Soccer 07 keeps the great qualities of the past titles and adds new dynamics as well. FIFA Soccer 07 has more than 510 teams, 27 leagues, and 51 stadiums.

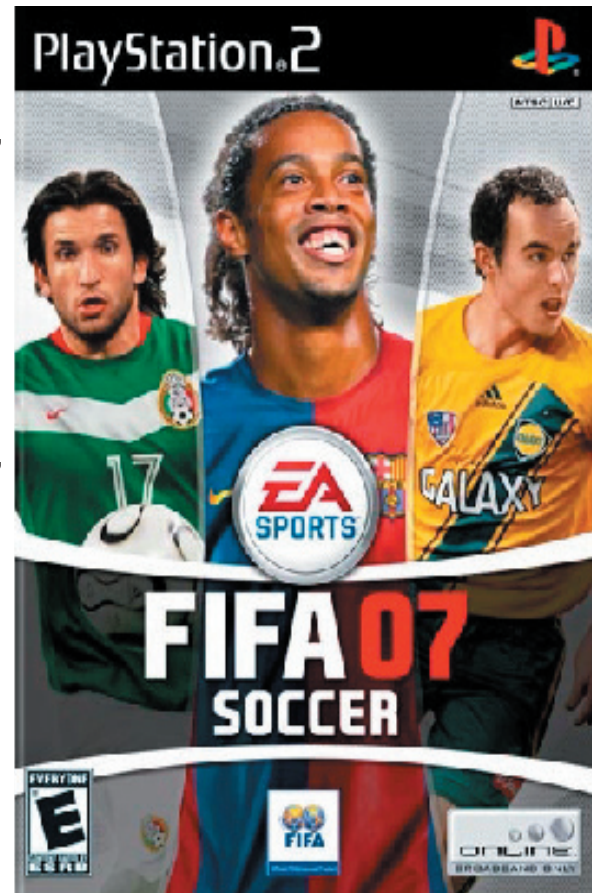
The greatest difference in the new version is the shooting. The shot depends on the balance and position of your player. A gamer can also put spin on the ball. This

includes any kind of side bend, topspin, or backspin. This helps in placing the ball in the corners of the net.

Also new to the game is *Create A Club*, with this, a person can pick a team name, create a jersey, and enter them into a league of their choice. The downfall to this is that there are few options for jersey designs and only two created teams are allowed.

FIFA Soccer 07 has also improved on its online gaming. The new feature is called *Interactive League*, where you can choose your favorite club and play their real fixtures against other opponents.

This will update each week and shows who is the best club playing online. FIFA Soccer 07 has improved from last year and is anticipated to be a top seller.



## Movie picks

- ★ Outstanding
- Worthy effort
- ▼ So-so
- A bomb

New review

		Local critic	Chicago Tribune	Dallas Morning News	Detroit Free Press	Miami Herald	N.Y. Daily News	Philadelphia Inquirer	San Jose Mercury News	Seattle Times
Catch a Fire	PG		▼	-	■	■	■	■	-	■
Death of a President	-		▼	-	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Flags of Our Fathers	R		▼	★	★	▼	★	■	-	■
Flicka	PG 13		▼	■	■	■	■	●	-	▼
Marie Antoinette	PG 13		■	▼	■	■	▼	★	-	★
The Prestige	PG 13		▼	-	■	■	▼	▼	-	★
Running with Scissors	R		●	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	▼
Saw III	R		●	-	●	-	●	▼	-	-

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## Upcoming Concerts

Tuesday, November 7, 8pm **Tech N9ne** @ the Beaumont Club

Tuesday, November 7, 8 pm **The Appleseed Cast and Copleand** @ the Granada

Thursday, November 9, 7pm **Atreyu, From First to Last, Everytime I Die, Chiodos** @ the Beaumont Club

Saturday, November 11, 8 pm **Say Anything and Mewithoutyou** @ Granada

Tuesday, November 14, 7 pm **Pixel Panda** @ El Torreon

Tuesday, November 28, 8 pm **the Bouncing Souls** @ Granada

Wednesday, November 29, 8pm **Kottonmouth Kings** @ Beaumont



# arts & entertainment

## Westport Dining

By CheyAnn Volkman & Erin Stewart

Is your stomach growling and the same old fast food places just aren't enough to satisfy your taste buds? Well we have found some great affordable places to curve your hunger right in Westport. If you are craving pizza check out Papa Keno's right in the heart of Westport. This little pizza shop serves sandwiches, pasta and some non-conventional types of pizza. You can get a full pizza of your choice, or go for the slice that is "as big as your face." You won't find your standard pepperoni and cheese pizza here. Be adventurous and find out what a 'Melvin' is. Or you can try the ever popular, BBQ! Other great pizza places in Westport are Da Bronx and of course Joe's Pizza.

If you are hungry for something other than pizza, try Gojo's Japanese Steak House. This restaurant cooks all the food in front of you on your table. Gojo's is a great place to go to with a group of friends or with a date and still be social with other people. The average dinner at Gojo's is around \$10-12 but well worth it! It gives you a lot of food to fill up on and the service and atmosphere is great!

Another good restaurant is First Watch. They carry typical breakfast and lunch menus and the prices won't put a strain on your wallet. This is a great place if you just want to sit in a booth and chat with some friends. If you happen to stop in for some breakfast their omelets are a must.

A good place to go for a few drinks is McCoy's. The atmosphere is cozy and has a *Cheers* feeling to it. The menu has a wide variety of foods to offer hungry stomachs, anything from pizzas to Mom's Mac N' Cheese, to steaks and salads. McCoy's also has a cigar room full of fine cigars. The average dish costs a whopping \$9.00.

If you like to enjoy your meal while listening to a live band, you should check out The Jazz. The bands play music from jazz, to rock, or strictly just covers. The cuisine is Louisiana Cajun style. Some dishes are shrimp, pastas, blackened chicken, jambalaya as well as many foods to choose from. Don't forget to try their appetizers too, like their snapping turtle, fried pickles.

There are plenty of other places in Westport to visit. Most are all in walking distance of each other so it is easy to just go venture out, the hard part will be actually deciding where you want to eat. Go out and find your favorite place to eat right in Westport!



## Whiskey Drinkin' Cigarette Smokin' Rock with Heart

By Erin Stewart

They may not be well known, play at the best venues, or draw the biggest crowds, but this is why local shows are so enjoyable, not to mention the cover charges at the door are almost always equivalent to nothing. Every now and again you'll get lucky and stumble across a band that's got talent and plays with heart.

The Great Planes is a band based right out of Kansas City. The band came to town around two months ago at The Brick, their music tugged at my heart as at listener's hearts as they watched them perform on the tiny stage. Their sound can be described as garage rock meets country. Five members make up this band, Eric Howard, 27, drums, Brent Kastler, 26, bass, Josh Haines, 27, keys, Justin Hoover, 25, guitar, and Larry Kraft, 25, vocals and guitar.

The Great Planes: their history. The band hasn't always been known as The Great Planes, their first band name was Element. Element started in 1996, members were: Eric Howard, Tim Hart, and Larry Kraft, they all went to high school with each other. They started off as a punk rock trio, as they started practicing more they decided it was necessary to add another member, this is where Justin Hoover came into the picture.

Hoover joined in 1997, and then came Brent Kastler later that same year. Hart took over vocals while Larry went to guitar. The time came when Tim went his separate way from the band and he moved out of state, so the new addition to the band was Josh Haines who concentrated on keyboard and producing samples.

Another name change was also underway. From the single title of Element, they changed to Element Self Hate Project. "It was really more of a joke; we changed the name because our music was really loud and obnoxious. People were comparing us to the Dillinger Escape Plan and Coalesce," Grinned Kastler after taking another drink of his beer. Needless to say, the Element Self Hate Project was short-lived, shortly

after they decided to go back to being called just Element.

Element went on tour with Season to Risk in 2002. Other than that tour, they have stuck around the Midwest, mostly playing shows in Nebraska; St. Louis, and local venues in KC. After awhile, they decided to scrap all of their old material and that it was time for another name change.

The name jump from Element to The Great Planes came in a more organized fashion. "We grew out of the music we were playing and we felt it was necessary for the progress of the band," said Kastler. The guys carried lists in their wallets and every time they thought of a possible band name they jotted it down, then when they met for practice, they decided what names stayed and what went. The Great Plains apparently struck a certain chord in the guys for a name, so it became theirs. "I came up with ideas but they were all laughed at...that happens most of the time with my ideas," joked drummer Eric Howard.

The band's musical influences are a wide range. "I would say anything like Link Ray to Slayer," said Kastler. "We have an eclectic sound, we play every type of music but pop" said Howard. "Just good music." The song lyrics are another great aspect of this band. Howard explains that the music lyrically is open to interpretation. Where the listener

might think it is about one particular thing when in fact it is about the complete opposite. "[The listeners] get to decide what the songs are talking about. It lets you grab what you want from it."

The main area of concentration right now for the band is finishing up there full length album. "Our goal is to have it finished in three months," said Howard. They are also trying to find a replacement for the key player Josh Haines. Haines recently moved out of state to attend art school. Watch for any upcoming shows in the future as well as on the lookout for their soon-to-come MySpace music page.





# commentary

## She said / He said : Why to or not to vote Republican

By Josh Loden

While the Republican Party has had some major set backs coming to the closure of this election race, there are still good reasons to vote republican and keep them in office. First, their continual moral stances affect every person in this nation and thus should be sought after to continue to vote to uphold certain moral standards. One can only wonder what will happen if we turn our back on our Christian heritage and continue to degrade the American society. Second, the support of the family unit has long been entrenched with the Republican Party. As we continue to fight a war against poverty and homelessness, we must look to build up society through a strong family unit that can teach the leaders of tomorrow, our children, the morals and principles that has made America great. The last reason one can still look to vote for the Republican Party is their continual assault on anyone who would threaten our very way of life. As our President has reminded us numerous times and as we see everyday in the media, there are people inside and outside the United States that would love to see America fall to her knees. There are groups of

people that would love to devour our very way of life. We must not let this happen. We must fight the moral and global war for our freedom. This is why one should vote for the Republican Party!



By Caitlin Stephenson

There are so many reasons not to vote for Republicans that it's hard to know where to begin, so, let's just focus on the latest scandals.

Many of the Republicans holding office today could be award-winning hypocrites. The Republican Party claims to be the party of "family values." Well, if family values include adultery, fraud and pedophilia, then, yes the Republicans are doing an excellent example job of representing family values.

A number of Republican elected officials are facing serious federal charges and possibly jail time for fraud, conspiracy, and bribery. Just a few of those involved in scandals include Rep. Duke Cunningham (R-CA), Rep. Tom Delay (R-TX) who have since resigned from office, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN), Rep. Bob Ney (R-OH), and Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-CA), and most recently, Rep. Mark Foley (R-FL). And don't forget trusted advisor Karl Rove and Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R-IL) faces further investigation by the House ethics committee because of his treatment of the Foley situation after it was alleged that Foley was sending inappropriate emails and text messages to young male Congressional Pages as well as lurking around locker rooms where the pages changed. Republican's were informed of this behavior as early as 2002, but instead of addressing the problem, chose to cover it up and save

Foley's seat, leaving young boys in danger of further victimization.

Unfortunately the best rebuttal Republicans have come up with is to dredge up old stories of former President Bill Clinton cheating on his wife. Isn't it time to get a fresh argument? Clinton is not running for office and his behavior wasn't criminal since Monica Lewinsky was a consenting adult.

Perhaps the best reason not to vote for Republicans was best put by Dr. Stephen Roberts: "Republicans suck!"

## Dude, Where are My Civil Rights?

By Caitlin Stephenson

In 1985 I was born with protection of all the rights in the Constitution, but today, sadly, many of those rights are reduced or in jeopardy. What is even more peculiar is that they were taken away by the Republican Party, a party that claims to be in favor of individual rights and less government involvement. But I guess it's okay because we are fighting a war on terror for democracy.

The question that keeps nagging at me is, what good is it to fight for democracy abroad when it is being taken away at home? The Bush administration has made it possible for the government to get around due process through the Patriot Act, which trumps all over the Fifth Amendment that was put in place to protect us from unwarranted government intrusion. Now we are all at risk. Unwarranted wire-tapping, searches, seizures and detainment are illegal and a direct violation of the Constitution. Taking away these rights does not make it easier to fight terrorism but does go against the very principles upon which this country was founded.

More recently the Bush administration has decided to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, which is our most basic instrument for securing personal freedom against unlawful imprisonment through the right for a hearing before a judge. This is one of our Constitution's most fundamental rights. The writ of habeas corpus is not a "get out of jail free card," but a crucial opportunity for a detained person to have a judge hear their case. Only four times before in our nation's history, twice during the Civil War and once after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, has the federal government suspended the right of habeas corpus. This most recent suspension of the right of habeas corpus is not justified.

Many Americans respond to these acts by saying that they aren't terrorists, so they aren't affected. Aside from this viewpoint being completely irresponsible and un-American, these acts do affect everyone. When the government is able to wrongfully search and detain people with no consequence, the fundamental nature of freedom is undermined. Too many people have died for the basic freedoms of this country for those rights to be diluted by the Bush administration.

Dictators like Saddam Hussein performed illegal searches and detained people without giving them trial. Taking away the very rights that we are fighting for in Iraq does not make sense. Fighting terrorists doesn't make it right to resort to their tactics.



# commentary

## Explaining the Unexplainable

By Megan Carnes



I can't believe that a month ago today I wasn't sitting in the Mac lab drinking red bull to finish my work that was due yesterday, but instead I was witnessing an event that changed my life forever.

Sitting in the back of a mini-van, I was joking with teammates and rehashing the past two days of hard work on the volleyball court. I was anxious to get back to Kansas City, MO to shower and go out for a friend's birthday. I remember thinking at 3:00 p.m. that if I lay my head down to sleep the trip would be fast and painless. Painless. I thought that exactly but little did I know in a mere ten minutes painless would be a foreign word in my vocabulary.

Even at this moment I cannot clearly recall what I witnessed and felt in the next several hours of that day, but for once I am able to think about it without the overwhelming feelings of guilt, confusion, and emotional trauma that I felt these past few weeks. This is what I do remember and what will stick with me whenever I go back to that rainy Labor Day my senior year of volleyball.

I was woken up with the screeching of brakes and the voice of a teammate but the odd thing is that I can't remember what she said I don't even remember what my body felt like running to the other van. I was watching myself run. I remember what my initial thought was, and I am so thankful what I thought was not the ultimate outcome for my teammates and coach.

I take back what I said about it all being more clear or able to talk about easily because the deeper I go the more my tears get caught in my throat and start forming in the corner of my eyes. I wish I could just tell the facts and I wish I could say it was something I could use as a cool story, but its not. This was life being taken and given back right in front of my eyes.

I can hear the broken horn of the SUV, wondering why won't anyone just turn it off, why was I so irate at a horn? I wasn't mad. I was panicked and I was lost. The images of my teammates in the van were one of a movie. For one second they were all frozen like I was witnessing it but it wasn't happening. Demolished vehicles, crushed seats, blood from my friends and the scream from a teammate are the images and noises I still encounter but are easier to push past. I felt helpless. I felt like I needed to be in there with them, feeling their pain, bleeding from my head. I was their teammate not a witness, not a spectator.

The minutes seemed like hours and all I could think was why isn't anyone helping the other car? I made my way down to the SUV and I did not have to take one step further when I realized what I was seeing wasn't injury, wasn't someone that needed help but death. Another human being that I did not know at that very moment felt like someone I was personally connected to. I can't start to explain the image and emotions because when it pops in my head I try to understand it and I try to block it out, but more importantly anyone reading this wont get it and can't if they try. I don't feel the need to explain something so personal that will be subject to question.

After that moment I wanted to collect the scattered debris. I wanted to pick up the various books and fishing gear covering the road. I saw the bright blue wedges and new she was one of us. I wanted her to have her things. Then that moment and tears subsided and my teammates were once again my number one. Thank God they were breathing but they were far from okay.

Once the paramedics were there, the seats and door cut out, the girls and coach taken away things weren't better. I wasn't calm. This was only beginning of a long and hard recovery.

The following hours were spent waiting in a small community hospital in Iowa but I wouldn't take back those moments for anything. I wasn't counting the hours but instead counting the minutes until I was able to see my teammates and coach, to see my family. Those hours in the hospital are unexplainable and only my team knows what I am talking about, knows the unspoken bond, and knows the feeling and the tears that followed.

To this day we are like any other team working hard for a win. Laughing with each other and getting upset with each other out there on that court, but the one thing we have that the other teams don't is the deep, common bond that will tie us together to that one moment, for the rest of our lives.

Video Games are deemed Valuable Learning Tool  
McClatchy-Tribune News Service (MCT)

The Federation of American Scientists' latest experiment could add a new dimension to game theory. FAS has teamed with the Entertainment Software Association and others to endorse video games as a learning tool. Now don't imagine that "Grand Theft Auto" or even "Madden NFL" are headed for American classrooms. FAS is calling for a national partnership, led by the federal government, with scientists, employers, educators, academics and the entertainment technology industry investigating, developing and marketing games that can teach students the skills they need to compete in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing world. Despite video games' reputation as money pits that encourage obsession and discourage physical activity, they can teach strategic and analytic thinking problem solving and quick adaptation - the very things that employers want.

### Views from Elsewhere

Political Slang - Prospect of memorable political phrases in 2006 campaign has slangophiles salivating  
By Paul Dickson(MCT)

GARRETT PARK, Md. \_ Six years after the emergence of the hanging chad and two years after the noun "swift boat" also achieved verb status, another midterm election is at hand and those of us who collect words and phrases have our pencils out. Elections have always had a strong impact on American language. Campaign slogans like "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" (1840) and FDR's promise of a New Deal (1930) linger in the recesses of our memories. And you can be sure that there are equally memorable words now waiting to be immortalized as candidates go to the hustings, deliver stump speeches and work the rubber-chicken circuit to rally grass-roots support.

Then there are terms that actually relate to the mechanics of voting, which until now have had to do with voting booths, polling places, mechanical voting devices and paper ballots, including the now-anachronistic two-page, pamphlet-like butterfly ballot that figured so prominently in the 2000 presidential election.

In what has been termed the most radical change in voting equipment in history, more than 30 million Americans will be using new and unfamiliar electronic voting devices when they cast their ballots Tuesday \_ likely causing a certain degree of confusion and controversy.

Odds are that before you can say lame duck there will be a whole new voting lexicon and it is a good bet that somewhere in this great land an electronic equivalent of hanging chad will emerge in the days ahead as the old chad clan \_ swinging, pregnant, hanging and dimpled \_ fades into oblivion.

In fact, some terms have already emerged. One is "fleeing voter" for someone who selects candidates in each race but fails to touch the screen to officially cast their ballot before leaving. And there seems to be a problem with some machines that produce a frozen screen that could put a chill in the election vocabulary.





# Letters to the Editor

By Jessica Horine

As an Avila student and a member of the women's volleyball team that witnessed the accident, I was greatly dismayed by the account published in The Talon. Even if one overlooks the grammatical errors, one cannot ignore the inattention to detail. Yes, 3 Avila players and the coach were seriously injured but the nature of the injuries was completely inaccurate, not to mention the fate of the young couple in the vehicle that crossed the median and hit our van. (They were killed). This has been a traumatic experience for the injured players and coach and for the rest of the volleyball team. We certainly appreciate the support demonstrated by our families, friends, fellow athletes, students, and staff here at Avila as well as our opponents and their administrations. Our physical and emotional healing will continue, but is not helped by a journalism staff that reports events with this degree of mistakes.

By Megan Carnes

In latest issue of the Talon there was an article written about Avila's volleyball team and the accident they were in many weeks ago. I am glad the community was being informed on this tragic event, but the disappointing fact was that the info was inaccurate. I was directly involved in this accident and to see that the time was not taken to double check facts, grammar and quotes makes me believe the severity of this accident was not taken into account. Written below is the correct information. You may wish to use this to clear up the incorrect information in your future issue. Thank you.

The Avila women's volleyball team has been preparing since last spring to produce the winning season expected. With a new coach, new philosophies and most of a new start for eight seniors, many anticipated the season. The events that took place on September 2, 2006 were definitely not expected and were nothing the team was able to prepare for.

As it started to rain on the way home from a tournament in Bellevue, Nebraska many of the girls were anxious to get home and recuperate from a tiring but successful weekend. With three players and coach driving a twelve-passenger van along with a mini-van filled with seven other players following close behind the unthinkable happened.

At about 3:15 pm an SUV driving the opposite direction on the other side of the road crossed the median driving directly into the path of the van. With no time to react, the van t-boned the SUV.

The results of this accident were fatal and for the Avila volleyball team serious and critical. Coach Amy Carlson suffered serious injuries to both knees and injury to her feet. Christine Davis, Senior middle hitter suffered deep tissue bruising of the leg with nerve damage. Lindsey Oliver, Junior right side hitter needed a total of eight stitches for the gash in her head and two stitches for a deep cut on her elbow. Ashlyn Sebby, Freshman outside hitter was taken by helicopter medical-evac to Creighton hospital and underwent eight hours of surgery for massive internal bleeding and other critical injuries.

But it was not just the injured teammates that are still recovering from the tragic and surreal experience several weeks back, but also the whole team who was there to witness the accident. The mini-van filled with teammates witnessing the horrifying accident take place.

Immediately after the accident the team postponed a conference game against Benedictine and dropped out of the Baker Tourney, but today looking at the girls practice and watching the intensity of their games it's easy to see the bond each of these ladies have and the family that has been formed not only on the court but off, a bond that will last a lifetime.

# Cracking down on sex offenders

by Stephen Sharkey

During Halloween cities across American cracked down on pedophilia, which is sexual contact with children. I applaud the fact that people are taking a stand against perverts. It seems like there are more and more pedophiliacs in American society. I don't see how people can stand up and fight for sex offenders but I do feel bad for those who have had to register as a sex offender for peeing in public. Those who prey on little kids are disgusting and should be locked up for good. The people in the world trying to protect these sick bastards saying they have a disease is ridiculous; how can wanting to harm children be a disease. Think about the entire trauma they cause kids mentally, physically, and emotionally. We have grown men like John Mark Karr who publicly say that he preys on little kids. He tried to admit to killing a little girl. I think we should put a bullet in his head. American society shouldn't be so forgiving to the perverts, they can be cured. Once we let them out of jail they will just go back to harming children. Society does make these creeps register, but that is not enough. When I was a kid I loved playing outside and causing trouble, I didn't worry about a sick man trying to touch me or kidnap me. The American government needs to do more about sex offenders in our country because jail time is just not enough. Cities should allow residents one free punch anywhere on those perverts that live in the communities. If I had it my way they should all get a bullet in the head. I hope any pedophile, pervert, sex offender, and child molester reading this knows that they are a creep and that they shouldn't be on this earth.

# Love in the Classroom

By David Wilson

A bar table is the center piece for a sparked conversation, as one man states, "there is this beautiful girl in my class she sits in the front row; I love her." Friends respond, "Have you talked to her?" In a quipped response, "no, why would I do that?" The conversation grows less intelligent from there as it becomes aggressively clear that most are content simply seeing a potential companion rather than the alternative of getting shot down.

"I see beautiful women in all of my classes, it just doesn't seem appropriate or plausible to act on those feelings in an educational environment. If you make a mistake they are there every class period to remind you," explained Darren McCall.

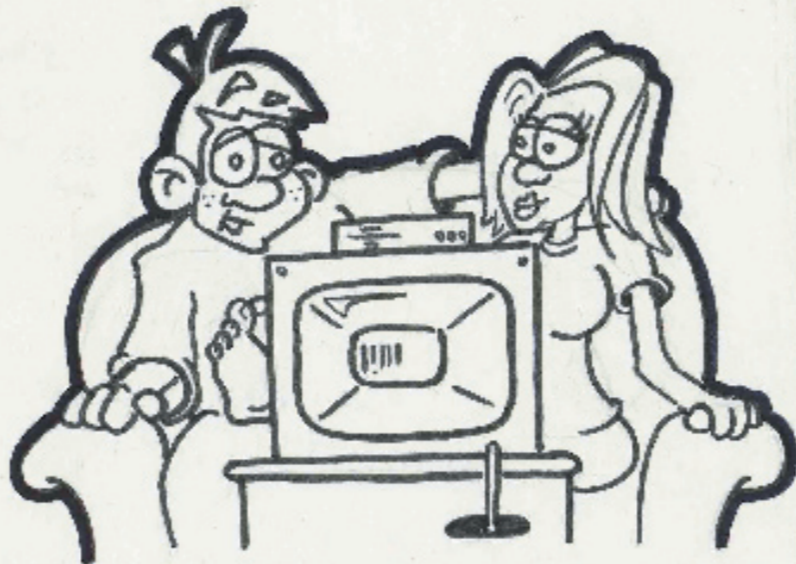
Beauty, attraction, and specifically love find their way into the being as a whole and plant roots. These roots vein as deep as possible and can never be annulled. Students endure day in and day out the grind of academic pursuits that inevitably obtain a level mundane. Looking beyond studies collegians can find one ideal entrenched in society to seek in the classroom. Singular is this entity that enthralls both man and woman and its script is companionship. As eager in relation to strides of academic grandeur should be the pursuit of true love. Luckily, the latter requires no books, nor money, or breathless charm as Sinatra would say, but simply a match. As cupid's painless arrow pierces the hearts of the lonely it allows for the aspiration of love while its poison tip creates the courage to initiate and sustain conversations; the groundbreaking first step in all relationships. Classrooms fill with the utmost regularity as Mondays through Fridays merry-go-round through the months, yet idly sit by "Dick" and "Jane" letting the open door to love close freely and unabashed.

Young Avila men and women in a manner that strikingly resembles worker ants attend the same classes daily, and in unparalleled importance, reside in the same seat with each passing day. The girl three rows up on the right hand side of the classroom will be there at every anticipated class right along with the guy in the back left seat, it's required...sometimes. Perhaps, the classroom atmosphere is disinclined to the labors of love, yet, congruent with loneliness are the children of Aristotle and the students of era's past who pine for the soul mate two rows up that appears as equally beautiful on Facebook as in Whitfield Center. Therefore, without reticence the soaring Eagles of Avila must pursue the classroom loves that fall by the waist side. Fore, this university has endured far too many that could have been.

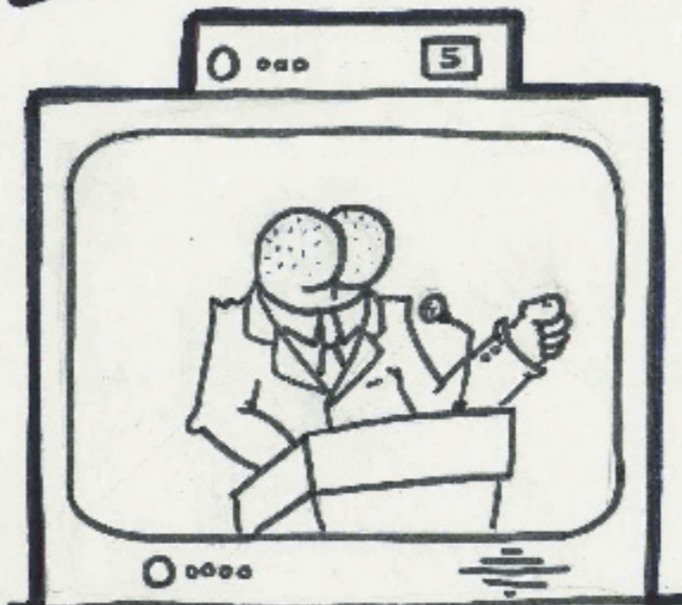
"To the extent you hide your feelings, you are alienated from yourself and others, and your loneliness is proportional," said Dorothy Briggs. Take a chance Eagles, the worst that can occur is a thoughtless "no" or "not interested" both of which fly freely from the mouths of the elitist scared, unless there is ugliness on both the inside and out that legitimizes their response. After all, the heart races less as a skydiver leaps from a plane than the man about to ask a girl he already loves to dinner for the first time, that's amore.



IS IT JUST ME OR  
DOES THAT GUY  
ON TV LOOK FUNNY?



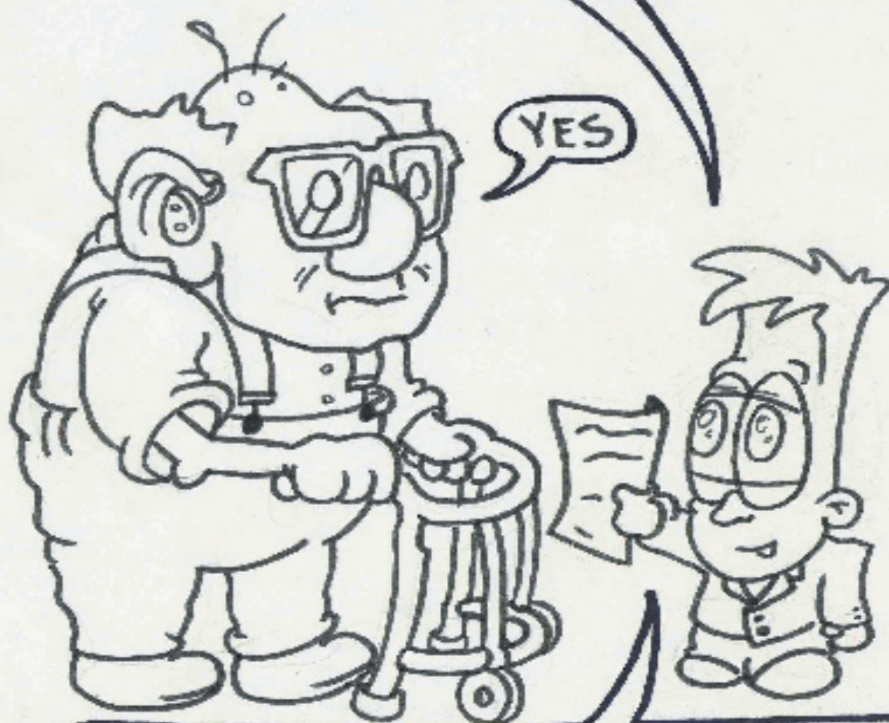
OH, THAT'S JUST A  
POLITICIAN... THEY  
ALL LOOK LIKE ASSES  
THIS TIME OF THE YEAR



...chad...

ARE YOU THE MAN THAT DISCOVERED  
THE LITTLE DIPPER?

YES



YOU ARE BEING SUED FOR \$6,000,000  
...MY CLIENT, MR. DIPPER FEELS  
"LITTLE" IS DISCRIMINATING  
TO HIS SIZE



WHAT!

HE WILL NOW BE KNOWN  
AS THE "SLIGHTLY  
UNDERSIZED, BUT LARGE  
IN PERSONALITY"  
DIPPER...



...chad...



# How well do you know your school?



If you know *what* this is and *where* on campus it is located, you could be the next Talon photo game winner. Be the first to e-mail the correct answer to [christopher.williamson@avila.edu](mailto:christopher.williamson@avila.edu) and receive a Cruzer Micro USB Flash Drive 1.0 GB.

(sorry - Talon staff and Avila employees not eligible to win on this one)

NO WINNERS FOR  
THE LAST GAME!  
THE ANSWERS ----

Ridgeway Hill  
Janine's Shadow  
Bench is Gone  
Red Streamer on Right is missing  
Right Speaker Logo is gone  
Logo placed on black dudes shirt on the right  
Lady white shirt turned purple around middle  
End of wall moved left  
Tree leaves grown right  
Purple lady on left  
Lady erased on very left  
Bookbag moved left

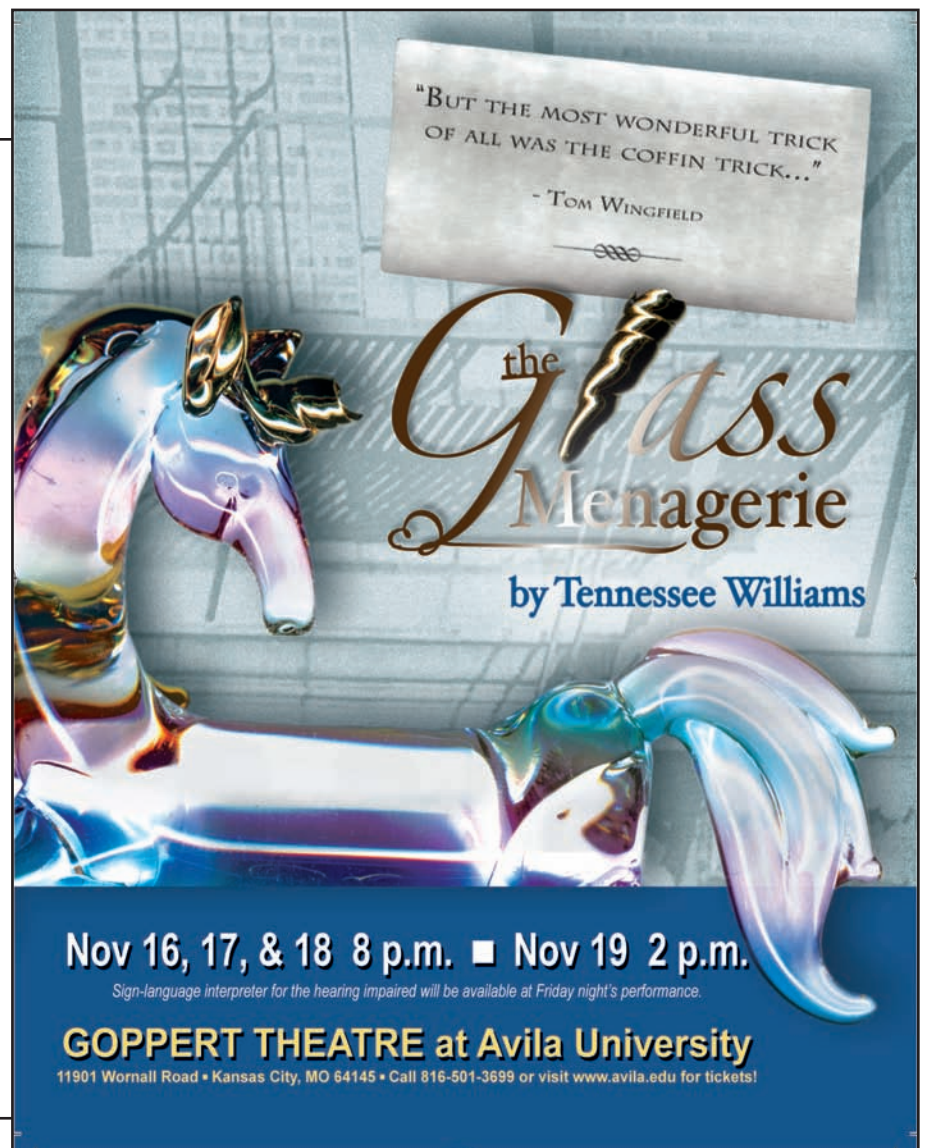
## Butt Out!!!



If you're a smoker or care about someone who smokes, Thursday, November 16 is the Great American Smokeout.

Activities throughout that week will help raise awareness about smoking and help support those who are wanting to quit. Come to the Avila Dining Room during lunch on November 16 to receive some things to help you make it through the day.

This event is sponsored by PEACH  
Peers Educating Avila about Counseling and Health





# Election education

It's easy to participate in this year's election. Our guide breaks down the voting process and offers tips to get you ready for Nov. 7

## WHO CAN VOTE

You must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of the state in which you're registering, 18 years old, not in prison (laws about people with criminal records vary by state) and not declared mentally insane. Many states will allow 17-year-olds to register if they'll be 18 by Election Day.

It can take between 10 days and three weeks for the local elections office to process your registration application, at which point they'll send you a voter registration card. Remember to register as early as possible to ensure that your application is processed before Election Day. Elections offices often get inundated with paperwork as the deadline approaches.

Contact your secretary of state ([www.fvap.gov/links/statelinks.html](http://www.fvap.gov/links/statelinks.html)) to learn more about the voting rules for your area.



Citizens enter voting booths in Martinez, Calif., in November 2004.

## WHERE TO REGISTER

Online registration is probably the easiest and quickest way to register. Go to your state's board of elections Web site for more information about their voter registration policies. You also can find registration information at the Federal Election Commission's Web site ([www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)) and the United States Election Assistance Commission's site ([www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov)).

Often the department of motor vehicles, public libraries and college campuses have registration information available.

## ABSENTEE BALLOTS

If you're not going to be present in your voting precinct on Election Day, make sure to request an absentee ballot.

Go to your state's elections page to download an absentee ballot or contact your county or city election official to request an absentee ballot. In some states, when you register to vote you also can request an absentee ballot.

Be sure to mail in the application to the appropriate office, and be wary of deadlines and any restrictions that apply specifically to your state.

For more information about states' absentee voting policies go to [www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag/vagchapter3.html](http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag/vagchapter3.html).

## DEADLINES

Many states have a 30-day registration deadline before Election Day. If you are registering to vote in Wyoming, Wisconsin, Idaho, New Hampshire, Minnesota or Maine you can register the day of the election as long as you bring an ID.

## GETTING INVOLVED

There are several ways to get involved with elections, especially for young voters.

College students who want to volunteer for a partisan campaign can check out the College Republican National Committee ([www.crnc.org](http://www.crnc.org) or 888-765-3564) or the College Democrats ([www.collegedems.com](http://www.collegedems.com)), a branch of the Democratic National Committee. Both the CRNC and the CD have many chapters on college campuses across the country that can provide more information.

Other young adults can visit Young Republicans ([www.yrnf.com](http://www.yrnf.com)) or Young Democrats ([www.yda.org](http://www.yda.org)) for more information about getting involved.

College students also can contact their local student government group to get involved in nonpartisan efforts during the election season. The Youth Voter Strategies Web site (<https://youngvoterstrategies.electionmail.name/e-contentstrategy/news3.asp>) has a list of other national nonpartisan groups like The State Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) and Black Youth Vote.

You also can join nonpartisan groups like the Raise Your Voice Campaign to help generate youth civic engagement and disseminate information about voting in the elections. Visit [www.actionforchange.org/getconnected/state](http://www.actionforchange.org/getconnected/state) for more information about the Raise Your Voice Campaign in your state.

To volunteer as a poll worker on Election Day, visit the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's Web site ([www.eac.gov](http://www.eac.gov)) or call 866-747-1471 for your state contact information.

BY BRIANNA BOND AND JAMIE LIVENGOD, McCLATCHY-TRIBUNE

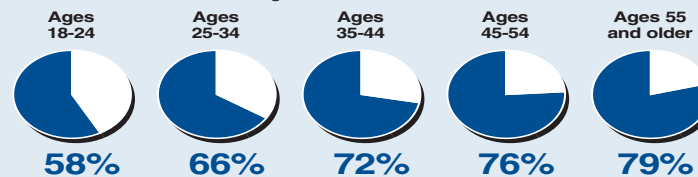
Another midterm election is quickly approaching, and candidates are scrambling for votes.

Young voters may turn out to be a key segment on Election Day. Seventy-three percent of young people who are eligible to vote are likely to cast ballots in November, according to a poll of 18- to 30-year-olds conducted by the Young Voter Strategies, a project of the George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management.

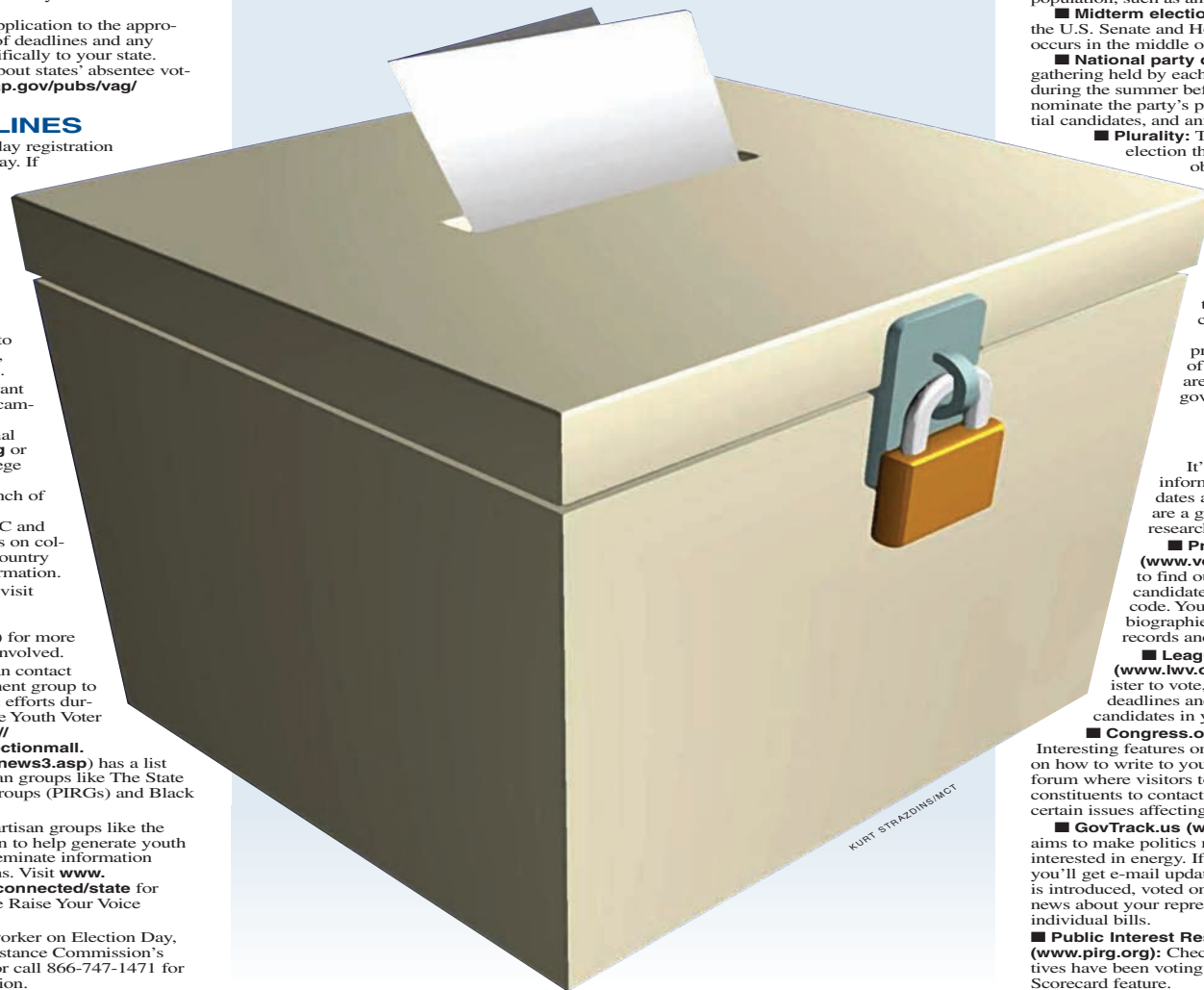
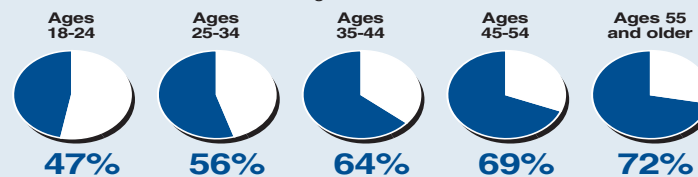
If you're new to voting, or haven't done it in a while, it's time to learn about the election process. To help you out, we offer information about registering to vote, getting involved in campaigns, researching candidates and more.

## U.S. CENSUS BUREAU VOTING INFORMATION

Registration rates in 2004:



Voting rates in 2004:



## VOTING TIMELINE

**1870:** The 15th Amendment was added to the U.S. Constitution, prohibiting any state from refusing voting rights to any man, regardless of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

**1920:** The 19th Amendment ensuring women's right to vote was ratified.

**1961:** The 23rd Amendment allows the votes of Washington, D.C., residents to count in the Electoral College.

**1964:** The 24th Amendment is ratified, disallowing the use of poll taxes. Poll taxes were used as a ploy to ensure that the poor black population could not vote even though they had been enfranchised almost 100 years earlier.

**1971:** The 26th Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.



Women suffragists protest for the right to vote in this 1913 photo.

## TERMS TO KNOW

All the political jargon that you hear during election season is enough to make you wish you had paid more attention in your high school government class. Consider this your refresher course. Below are some terms from PBS.org that will let you walk into your voting site with confidence.

■ **Bicameral legislature:** A legislature consisting of two separate chambers or houses. In the U.S. Congress, the lower house is the House of Representatives, and the upper house is the Senate.

■ **Canvassing:** A tactic to win votes by contacting voters directly, usually through door-to-door, telephone or Internet campaigning.

■ **Caucus:** Meeting of party members to decide which delegates to send to a state or national nominating convention.

■ **Gerrymander:** To divide a voting area to give one political party a majority in as many districts as possible or weaken the voting strength of a specific population, such as an ethnic group.

■ **Midterm election:** An election for seats in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives that occurs in the middle of a president's four-year term.

■ **National party convention:** The official gathering held by each of the major political parties during the summer before a presidential election to nominate the party's presidential and vice-presidential candidates, and announce the party's platform.

■ **Plurality:** The number of votes in an election that the leading candidate obtains over the next highest candidate.

■ **Primary election:** An election to select a party's candidates for public office, held some time before the general election. In a closed primary, voters must declare a party affiliation and may vote only for candidates of their party.

■ **Referendum:** Putting a proposed law to a direct vote of the electorate. Referendums are only used by state and local governments.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

It's a lot of work to gather the information you need about candidates and issues. These Web sites are a good place to start your research.

■ **Project Vote Smart** ([www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)): Use this site to find out more about your district's candidates just by entering your ZIP code. You can look through their biographies, issue positions, voting records and campaign finances.

■ **League of Women Voters** ([www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)): On this site you can register to vote, find important registration deadlines and get information about the candidates in your area.

■ **Congress.org** ([www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org)): Interesting features on this site include the tip sheet on how to write to your senator and the Soapbox, a forum where visitors to the site can ask their fellow constituents to contact their representative about certain issues affecting their district.

■ **GovTrack.us** ([www.govtrack.us](http://www.govtrack.us)): This site aims to make politics more personal. Say you're interested in energy. If you sign up on govtrack.us, you'll get e-mail updates on energy legislation that is introduced, voted on or passed. You also can get news about your representatives and updates on individual bills.

■ **Public Interest Research Groups** ([www.pirg.org](http://www.pirg.org)): Check out how your representatives have been voting with this site's Congressional Scorecard feature.